חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִּׁ"י · דברים · שְׁבִיעִי

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DEVARIM · 7TH ALIYAH

📖 CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this aliyah, Moshe Rabbeinu continues recounting the division of the lands on the eastern side of the Yarden. He details the specific territories assigned to Machir, the Reubenites, and the Gadites, outlining their borders from the Arnon and Jabbok valleys to the Jordan and the Dead Sea. This section establishes the physical boundaries of the inheritance given to these tribes before Bnei Yisrael cross over into Eretz Yisrael proper.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פָּסוּק א

Pasuk 1

וּלְמָכִיר נָתַתִּי אֶת הַגִּלְעָד׃

Gilead — I gave and to Machir

פָּסוּק ב

Pasuk 2

וְלָרְאוּבֵנִי וְלַגָּדִי נָתַתִּי מִן הַגִּלְעָד וְעַד נַחַל אַרְנֹן תּוֹךְ

the middle of Arnon the valley of and until Gilead from I gave and to the Gadites and to the Reubenites

הַנַּחַל וּגְבֻל וְעַד יַבֹּק הַנַּחַל גְּבוּל בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן׃

Ammon the children of the border of the river Yabbok and until and the border the valley

רַשִּׁ"י

תוך הנחל וגבל. כָּל הַנַּחַל וְעוֹד מֵעֵבֶר לִשְׁפָתוֹ, כְּלוֹמַר עַד וְעַד

and until until meaning to say of its bank from the side and more the brook all of and the territory the brook the midst of

בְּכְלָל וְיוֹתֵר מִכֵּן׃

than this and more is included

פָּסוּק ג

Pasuk 3

וְהָעֲרָבָה וְהַיַּרְדֵּן וּגְבֻל מִכִּנֶּרֶת וְעַד יָם הָעֲרָבָה יָם הַמֶּלַח

the salt the sea of the Arabah the sea of and until from Chinnereth and the border and the Jordan And the Arabah

תַּחַת אַשְׁדֹּת הַפִּסְגָּה מִזְרָחָה׃

eastward the Pisgah the slopes of under

רַשִּׁ"י

מכנרת. מֵעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן הַמַּעֲרָבִי, וְנַחֲלַת בְּנֵי גָד מֵעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן

of the Jordan was on the side Gad of the children of and the inheritance the western of the Jordan from the side From Chinnereth

הַמִּזְרָחִי, וְנָפַל בְּגוֹרָלָם רֹחַב הַיַּרְדֵּן כְּנֶגְדָּם, וְעוֹד מֵעֵבֶר שְׂפָתוֹ עַד
the eastern and there fell in their lot the width of the Jordan opposite them, and furthermore from the side of its bank until

כִּנֶּרֶת, וְזֶהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְהִירְדֵן וּגְבֻל – הַיַּרְדֵּן וּמֵעֵבֶר לוֹ:
Chinnereth, and this is that which is said and the Jordan and the territory – the Jordan and from the side of it:

פָּסוּק ד

Pasuk 4

וָאֲצַו אֶתְכֶם בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֵאמֹר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם אֶת הָאָרֶץ
And I commanded you at the time that Hashem your God has given to you — the land

הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ חֲלוּצִים תַּעַבְרוּ לִפְנֵי אֲחֵיכֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל בְּנֵי
this to possess it armed you shall cross before your brothers the children of Yisrael all men of

חָיִל:
valor

רַשִׁ"י

ואצו אתכם. לִבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן וּבְנֵי גָד הָיָה מְדַבֵּר:
And I commanded you to the sons of Reuven and the sons of Gad he was speaking:

רַשִׁ"י

לפני אחיכם. הֵם הָיוּ הוֹלְכִים לִפְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַמִּלְחָמָה לְפִי שֶׁהָיוּ גִּבּוֹרִים, וְאוֹיְבִים
Before your brethren they were going before Yisrael to the battle because that they were mighty men, and enemies

נוֹפְלִים לִפְנֵיהֶם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דברים ל"ג "וְטָרַף זְרוֹעַ אַף קָדְקֹד":
fell before them as it is said Devarim 33 and he tears the arm also the crown:

פָּסוּק ה

Pasuk 5

רַק נְשֵׁיכֶם וְטַפְּכֶם וּמִקְנֵכֶם יָדַעְתִּי כִּי מִקְנֶה רַב לָכֶם יֵשְׁבוּ
Only your wives and your children and your livestock I know that livestock you have much shall dwell

בְּעָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָכֶם:
in your cities which I have given to you:

פָּסוּק ו

Pasuk 6

עַד אֲשֶׁר יָנִיחַ יְהוָה לַאֲחֵיכֶם כָּכֶם וְיָרְשׁוּ גַּם הֵם אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
until that will grant rest Hashem to your brothers like you and they will possess also they — the land which

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָהֶם בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן וְשַׁבְתֶּם אִישׁ לִירֻשָּׁתוֹ
Hashem your God is giving to them on the side of the Jordan and you shall return each man to his inheritance

אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָכֶם:
which I have given to you:

פָּסוּק ז

Pasuk 7

וְאֶת יְהוֹשׁוּעַ צִוֵּיתִי בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֵאמֹר עֵינֶיךָ הָרֹאֹת אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר

that all — are those seeing your eyes saying that at the time I commanded Yehoshua and —

עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לִשְׁנֵי הַמְּלָכִים הָאֵלֶּה כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לְכָל הַמַּמְלָכוֹת

the kingdoms to all Hashem will do so these the kings to the two of your God Hashem did

אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹבֵר שָׁמָּה׃

to there are crossing over you which

פָּסוּק ח

Pasuk 8

לֹא תִירָאוּם כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא הַנִּלְחָם לָכֶם׃

for you is the One Who fights He your God Hashem for fear them Do not

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Moshe Rabbeinu then recounts the strict charge he gave to the Reubenites and Gadites, reminding them of their obligation to cross over as armed shock-troops at the head of Bnei Yisrael to help their brothers conquer the land, leaving only their families and abundant livestock behind in their assigned cities. Finally, Moshe encourages Yehoshua, urging him not to fear the Canaanite kings, as he has already witnessed how Hashem destroyed Sichon and Og, and reminding him that Hashem Himself will fight the battles for Bnei Yisrael.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

My dear talmid, look closely at the condition Moshe Rabbeinu sets for the tribes of Reuven and Gad. They had already received their portion of land, their families were safe, and their livestock was secure. Yet, Moshe tells them they cannot simply settle down and enjoy their blessing while their brothers are still fighting. They must cross the Jordan as chalutzim, armed and ready at the head of the camp, to help the rest of Klal Yisrael conquer their inheritance.

This is a profound foundation in our avodah. Hashem does not give a Yid wealth, talent, or peace of mind just for his own comfort. If Hashem has blessed you with stability in any area of life, it is not a signal to retire into your own private tent. It is a call to arms. Your personal blessing is meant to be the fuel that allows you to stand at the front lines for another Yid who is still struggling to find his own footing.

We see this same chizuk passed on to Yehoshua at the end of the aliyah. Moshe tells him not to fear the upcoming battles because "Hashem your G-d is the One who fights for you." When you step out of your comfort zone to help your brother, you do not have to worry about what you might lose or the energy you will expend. Hashem Himself goes before you and protects your own portion while you are busy caring for His children.

Today, identify one area where Hashem has given you "rest" or abundance, whether it is financial stability, Torah knowledge, or emotional strength, and use that specific strength to actively help a fellow Yid who is still fighting his own battles.

דַּף יוֹמִי · חֻלִּין · דַּף ע״ט

Daf Yomi · The Full Daf · Elucidated Talmud · Navy & Gold Edition · with Rashi

📖 THE SUGYA

In this daf, we continue our deep dive into the sugya of "oto v'es beno" (slaughtering an animal and its offspring on the same day) and how it applies to the father. We explore the opinion of Chananya, who holds that the prohibition applies to the father as well as the mother, and how this connects to the fundamental question of "chayshinun l'zera ha'av"—whether we concern ourselves with the seed of the father in determining the species of the offspring.

We will also learn about the halachos of kilayim (diverse kinds) regarding mules, examining how we determine their maternal lineage through physical signs like their voice, ears, and tail. The Gemara then transitions into a discussion regarding the status of a hybrid animal (a cross between a goat and a ewe) and the koy (an animal of doubtful status) regarding the prohibition of "oto v'es beno."

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עמוד א׳ DAF 79A

EXPLANATION

וְלַחֲנַנְיָה, כְּתִיב ״אוֹתוֹ״ דְּמַשְׁמַע זָכָר, וּכְתִיב ״בְּנוֹ״ – מִי שֶׁבְּנוֹ כָּרוּךְ אַחֲרָיו דְּמַשְׁמַע נְקֵבָה, הִלְכָּךְ נוֹהֵג בֵּין בִּזְכָרִים בֵּין בִּנְקֵבוֹת.

And according to Chananya, the reason for his ruling is that **it is written "it"** [oto], **which indicates a male** parent, **and it is written "its offspring"** [beno] — meaning **that** parent **whose offspring clings after it, which indicates a female** parent. **Therefore**, the prohibition of slaughtering an animal and its offspring on the same day **applies both to males and to females**.

RULING

אָמַר רַב הוּנָא בַּר חִיָּיא אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: הִלְכְתָא כַּחֲנַנְיָה,

Rav Huna bar Chiyya said that **Shmuel said: The halacha is in accordance with Chananya**, that the prohibition applies to the father as well.

STATEMENT

וְאַזְדָּא שְׁמוּאֵל לְטַעְמֵיהּ, דְּתָנַן: רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: הַנּוֹלָדִים מִן הַסּוּס, אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֲבִיהֶן חֲמוֹר – מוּתָּרִין זֶה בְּזֶה, אֲבָל הַנּוֹלָדִין מִן הַחֲמוֹר עִם הַנּוֹלָדִין מִן הַסּוּס – אֲסוּרִין.

And Shmuel follows his own line of **reasoning, as we learned** in a Mishnah: **Rabbi Yehuda says: Those** mules **born from a** female **horse, even though their father is a donkey, are permitted** to mate **one with another; but those born from a** female **donkey** mated **with those born from a** female **horse are prohibited** to mate with each other because of the prohibition of diverse kinds [kilayim].

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: זוֹ דִּבְרֵי רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, דְּאָמַר אֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, אֲבָל חֲכָמִים אוֹמְרִים: כָּל מִינֵי פִּרְדוֹת אַחַת הֵן.

And Rav Yehuda said that **Shmuel said: This is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda, who says we do not concern ourselves with the seed of the father** in determining the species of the offspring, but rather we look only at the mother. **But the Sages say: All types of mules are one** species, and they may mate with each other.

EXPLANATION

מַאן חֲכָמִים? חֲנַנְיָה הוּא, דְּאָמַר חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, וְהַאי בַּר סוּסְיָא וַחֲמָרָא, וְהַאי בַּר חֲמָרָא וְסוּסְיָא – כּוּלְּהוּ חֲדָא מִינָא נִינְהוּ.

Who are "the Sages" mentioned here? **It is Chananya, who says we do concern ourselves with the seed of the father. And** therefore, **this** mule which is **the offspring of a horse and a donkey, and that** mule which is **the offspring of a donkey and a horse — all of them are one species**, since both have horse and donkey components.

QUESTION

אִיבַּעְיָא לְהוּ: מִי פְּשִׁיט לֵיהּ לְרַבִּי יְהוּדָה דְּאֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, אוֹ דִלְמָא סַפּוּקֵי מְסַפְּקָא לֵיהּ?

A dilemma was raised before them: Is it certain to Rabbi Yehuda that we do not concern ourselves with the seed of the father, or perhaps he is in doubt about it?

EXPLANATION

לְמַאי נָפְקָא מִינַּהּ? לְמִישְׁרֵא פְּרִי עִם הָאֵם,

The Gemara asks: **What is the practical difference** of this inquiry? The Gemara answers: **To permit** mating **the offspring with the** species of its **mother**.

EXPLANATION

אִי אָמְרַתְּ: מִיפְּשָׁט פְּשִׁיטָא לֵיהּ – פְּרִי עִם הָאֵם שְׁרֵי, אֶלָּא אִי אָמְרַתְּ: סַפּוּקֵי מְסַפְּקָא לֵיהּ – פְּרִי עִם הָאֵם אָסוּר. מַאי?

If you say it is certain to him that we ignore the father's seed, then mating **the offspring with the mother**'s species **is permitted**, as they are both considered the same species. **But if you say he is in doubt, then** mating **the offspring with the mother**'s species **is prohibited**, out of concern that the father's seed might determine the species. **What** is the resolution?

PROOF

תָּא שְׁמַע: רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: כָּל הַנּוֹלָדִים מִן הַסּוּס, אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֲבִיהֶן חֲמוֹר – מוּתָּרִין זֶה בָּזֶה.

Come and hear a proof from our Mishnah: **Rabbi Yehuda says: All those born from a** female **horse, even though their father is a donkey, are permitted** to mate **one with another**.

INFERENCE

הֵיכִי דָּמֵי? אִילֵימָא דַּאֲבוּהּ דְּהַאי חֲמוֹר וַאֲבוּהּ דְּהַאי חֲמוֹר – צְרִיכָא לְמֵימַר?

What are the circumstances? If we say that the father of this male mule **is a donkey and the father of that** female mule **is a donkey, does it need to be said** that they may mate? Since both their mothers are horses and both their fathers are donkeys, they are identical!

INFERENCE

אֶלָּא לָאו דַּאֲבוּהּ דְּהַאי סוּס וַאֲבוּהּ דְּהַאי חֲמוֹר; וְקָתָנֵי מוּתָּרִים זֶה עִם זֶה, אַלְמָא מִיפְּשָׁט פְּשִׁיטָא לֵיהּ!

Rather, is it not that the father of this male mule **is a horse, and the father of that** female mule **is a donkey? And yet it teaches** that **they are permitted one with another! Consequently, it is certain to him** that we do not concern ourselves with the father's seed.

REFUTATION

לָא, לְעוֹלָם דַּאֲבוּהּ דְּהַאי חֲמוֹר, וַאֲבוּהּ דְּהַאי חֲמוֹר. וּדְקָאָמַרְתְּ: צְרִיכָא לְמֵימַר?

The Gemara rejects this: **No, actually** we are dealing with a case **where the father of this** one **is a donkey and the father of that** one **is a donkey. And as for what you said: "Does it need to be said?"** — yes, it is necessary.

EXPLANATION

מַהוּ דְּתֵימָא: אָתֵי צַד דְּסוּס מִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בְּצַד חֲמוֹר, וְצַד חֲמוֹר מִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בְּצַד סוּס, קָא מַשְׁמַע לַן.

Lest you say: The horse side of the male **comes and mates with the donkey side** of the female, **and the donkey side** of the male **mates with the horse side** of the female, which would violate the prohibition of diverse kinds, **therefore he teaches us** that they are considered a single species and may mate.

PROOF

תָּא שְׁמַע: רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר, פִּרְדָּה שֶׁתָּבְעָה – אֵין מַרְבִּיעִין עָלֶיהָ לֹא סוּס וְלֹא חֲמוֹר, אֶלָּא מִינָהּ.

Come and hear another proof from a Braisa: **Rabbi Yehuda says: A female mule that is in heat — we do not mate with her either a horse or a donkey, but rather** only one of **her own kind**, another mule.

INFERENCE

וְאִי אָמְרַתְּ מִפְּשָׁט פְּשִׁיטָא לֵיהּ לַרְבַּע עַלַּהּ מִינָא דְּאִמַּהּ!

And if you say it is certain to him that we ignore the father's seed, **let us mate with her the species of her mother!** Why is that forbidden?

RESOLUTION

דְּלָא יָדְעִינַן מִינָא דְּאִמַּהּ מַאי נִיהוּ.

The Gemara answers: This is a case **where we do not know what the species of her mother is**.

OBJECTION

וְהָא "אֶלָּא מִינָהּ" קָתָנֵי?

The Gemara objects: **But does it not teach "but rather** one of **her own kind"**, which implies we do know her kind?

RESOLUTION

הָכִי קָאָמַר: אֵין מַרְבִּיעִין עָלֶיהָ לֹא מִין סוּס וְלֹא מִין חֲמוֹר, לְפִי שֶׁאֵין יוֹדְעִין בְּמִינָהּ.

The Gemara explains: **This is what it is saying: We do not mate with her either the species of a horse or the species of a donkey, because we do not know her** mother's **species**, and therefore we must mate her only with another mule.

QUESTION

וְלִיבְדּוֹק בְּסִימָנִין? דְּאָמַר אַבָּיֵי: עָבֵי קָלֵיהּ – בַּר חַמָּרָא, צְנִיף קָלֵיהּ – בַּר סוּסְיָא.

The Gemara asks: **But let us check her by her physical signs! As Abaye said: If its voice is deep, it is the offspring of a female donkey; if its voice is shrill, it is the offspring of a female horse.**

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רַב פָּפָּא: רַבְרְבָן אוּדְנֵיהּ וְזוּטְרָא גְּנוּבְתֵּיהּ – בַּר חַמָּרָא, זוּטְרָן אוּדְנֵיהּ וְרַבָּה גְּנוּבְתֵּיהּ – בַּר סוּסְיָא.

And Rav Pappa said: If its ears are large and its tail is small, it is the offspring of a female donkey; if its ears are small and its tail is large, it is the offspring of a female horse.

RESOLUTION

הָכָא בְּמַאי עָסְקִינַן? בְּאִלֶּמֶת וּגְדֻמֶּת.

The Gemara answers: **With what are we dealing here? With a mute** mule whose voice cannot be heard, **and** whose ears and tail are **lopped off**, so her signs cannot be checked.

QUESTION

מַאי הָוֵי עֲלַהּ?

The Gemara asks: **What is the conclusion of this** matter?

PROOF

תָּא שְׁמַע, דְּאָמַר רַב הוּנָא בְּרֵיהּ דְּרַב יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: הַכֹּל מוֹדִין בִּפְרִי עִם הָאֵם שֶׁאָסוּר.

Come and hear, as Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua said: Everyone agrees regarding mating **the offspring with the mother**'s species **that it is prohibited.**

INFERENCE

שְׁמַע מִינַּהּ סָפֵק מְסַפְּקָא לֵיהּ, שְׁמַע מִינַּהּ.

Learn from this that he is in doubt about whether we concern ourselves with the father's seed. The Gemara confirms: **Learn from this** that it is so.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לֵיהּ רַבִּי אַבָּא לְשַׁמָּעֵיהּ: אִי מְעַיְּילַתְּ לִי כּוּדַנְיָיתָא בְּרִיסְפַּק, עַיֵּין לְהָנָךְ דְּדָמְיָין לַהֲדָדֵי, וְעַיֵּיל לִי. אַלְמָא קָסָבַר: אֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב.

Rabbi Abba said to his attendant: If you bring mules in for me to the team, look for those that resemble one another and bring them in for me. Consequently, he holds: We do not concern ourselves with the seed of the father, and physical resemblance is sufficient to establish that they are of the same maternal species.

EXPLANATION

וְסִימָנִין דְּאוֹרָיְיתָא.

And he holds that these **distinguishing characteristics** apply **by Torah law**, and can therefore be relied upon.

BRAISA

תָּנוּ רַבָּנַן: אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ נוֹהֵג בְּכִלְאַיִם וּבְכוֹי.

The Rabbis taught in a baraita: The prohibition of slaughtering an animal **itself and its offspring** on the same day **applies to** the offspring of **diverse kinds** of animals **and to the koy**.

BRAISA

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר: כִּלְאַיִם הַבָּא מִן הָעֵז וּמִן הָרָחֵל – אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ נוֹהֵג בּוֹ, כּוֹי – אֵין אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ נוֹהֵג בּוֹ.

Rabbi Eliezer says: With regard to **a hybrid that comes from** the mating of **a goat and a ewe,** the prohibition of **itself and its offspring applies to it;** but with regard to **a koy,** the prohibition of **itself and its offspring does not apply to it.**

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא: אֵיזֶהוּ כּוֹי שֶׁנֶּחְלְקוּ בּוֹ רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וַחֲכָמִים? זֶה הַבָּא מִן הַתַּיִּישׁ וּמִן הַצְּבִיָּה.

Rav Chisda says: What is the koy about which Rabbi Eliezer and the Sages disagree? This is the offspring **that comes from** the mating of **a male goat and a doe.**

QUESTION

הֵיכִי דָּמֵי? אִילֵּימָא בְּתַיִּישׁ הַבָּא עַל הַצְּבִיָּה, וְיָלְדָה, וְקָא שָׁחֵיט לַהּ וְלִבְרָהּ –

The Gemara asks: **What are the circumstances** of the case? **If we say** that we are dealing **with a male goat that mates with a doe, and she gave birth** to this offspring, **and** one **slaughters her and her offspring** on the same day—

OBJECTION

וְהָאָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא: הַכֹּל מוֹדִים בְּהֵיא צְבִיָּה וּבְנָהּ תַּיִּישׁ, שֶׁפָּטוּר! שֶׁה וּבְנוֹ אָמַר רַחֲמָנָא, וְלֹא צְבִי וּבְנוֹ!

but doesn't Rav Chisda say: All concede in a case where **she is a doe and her offspring is a goat** because she mated with a goat, **that** the one who slaughters them both on the same day **is exempt** from lashes? For **the Merciful One states** in the Torah: **"A sheep... and its offspring," and not a deer and its offspring!**

ANSWER

אֶלָּא בְּצִבְי הַבָּא עַל הַתְּיָישָׁה וְיָלְדָה, וְקָא שָׁחֵיט לַהּ וְלִבְרָהּ,

Rather, we must be dealing **with a deer that mates with a female goat, and she gave birth** to this offspring, **and** one **slaughters her and her offspring** on the same day.

OBJECTION

וְהָאָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא: הַכֹּל מוֹדִים בְּהֵיא תְּיָישָׁה וּבְנָהּ צְבִי – שֶׁחַיָּיב, "שֶׂה" אָמַר רַחֲמָנָא, וּבְנוֹ כֹּל דְּהוּ!

But doesn't Rav Chisda say: All concede in a case where **she is a female goat and her offspring is a deer** because she mated with a deer, **that** the one who slaughters them both on the same day **is liable?** For **the Merciful One states** in the Torah: **"A sheep," and its offspring** of **any kind,** even if it is a deer!

RESOLUTION

לְעוֹלָם, בְּתַיִישׁ הַבָּא עַל הַצְּבִיָּה, וְיָלְדָה בַּת, וּבַת יָלְדָה בֵּן, וְקָא שָׁחֵיט לַהּ וְלִבְרָהּ.

Actually, the dispute is **with regard to a male goat that mates with a doe, and she gave birth to a female** offspring, which is a koy, **and** this **female** offspring **gave birth to a male** offspring, **and** one **slaughters her**—the mother koy—**and her offspring** on the same day.

EXPLANATION

רַבָּנַן סָבְרִי: חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, וְשֶׁה – וַאֲפִילּוּ מִקְצָת שֶׂה.

The Rabbis hold: We are concerned for the seed of the father, meaning the father's genetic contribution is significant, **and** the word **"sheep"** in the verse means **even** if it is only **partially a sheep,** since its father was a goat.

EXPLANATION

וְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר סָבַר: אֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, וְ"שֶׂה וַאֲפִילּוּ מִקְצָת שֶׂה" – לָא אָמְרִינַן.

And Rabbi Eliezer holds: We are not concerned for the seed of the father, and therefore **we do not say** that **"a sheep"** includes **even** that which is only **partially a sheep.**

QUESTION

וְלִיפְלוֹג בְּחוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, בִּפְלוּגְתָּא דַּחֲנַנְיָה וְרַבָּנַן?

The Gemara asks: **But let them disagree** directly **on** whether **we are concerned for the seed of the father,** which is **the dispute of Chananya and the Rabbis** as to whether the prohibition of "itself and its offspring" applies to the father as well!

RESOLUTION

אִי פְּלִיגִי בְּהָהִיא, הֲוָה אָמֵינָא: בְּהָא אֲפִילּוּ רַבָּנַן מוֹדוּ, דְּ"שֶׂה וַאֲפִילּוּ מִקְצָת שֶׂה" לָא אָמְרִינַן, קָא מַשְׁמַע לַן.

The Gemara answers: **If they had disputed** only **in that** case, **I would have said: In this** case of a koy, **even the Rabbis concede that we do not say "a sheep"** includes **even** that which is only **partially a sheep. Therefore,** the baraita **teaches us** that the Rabbis hold this rule applies here too.

OBJECTION

וְהָא דְּתָנַן: כּוֹי אֵין שׁוֹחֲטִין אוֹתוֹ בְּיוֹם טוֹב, וְאִם שְׁחָטוֹ – אֵין מְכַסִּין אֶת דָּמוֹ.

The Gemara challenges: **But that which we learned in a Mishnah: A koy, we may not slaughter it on a Festival** ab initio, **and if he did slaughter it, we do not cover its blood** on the Festival.

INFERENCE

בְּמַאי עָסְקִינַן? אִילֵימָא בְּתַיִישׁ הַבָּא עַל הַצְּבִיָּה וְיָלְדָה, בֵּין לְרַבָּנַן בֵּין לְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר – לִשְׁחוֹט וְלִיכַסֵּי, צְבִי וַאֲפִילּוּ מִקְצָת צְבִי.

With what case **are we dealing? If we say** it is **with a male goat that mates with a doe, and she gave birth,** then **whether according to the Rabbis or according to Rabbi Eliezer, let him slaughter** it **and cover** its blood, since it is **a deer, and** we should say **even** if it is only **partially a deer** it requires covering!

INFERENCE

אֶלָּא בִּצְבִי הַבָּא עַל הַתְּיִישָׁה וְיָלְדָה, אִי לְרַבָּנַן – לִשְׁחוֹט וְלִיכַּסֵּי, אִי לְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר – לִשְׁחוֹט וְלָא לִיכַּסֵּי.

Rather, we must be dealing **with a deer that mates with a female goat, and she gave birth.** But **if** this is **according to the Rabbis, let him slaughter** it **and cover** its blood because of its father; and **if** it is **according to Rabbi Eliezer, let him slaughter** it **and not cover** its blood at all, as it is a domesticated animal like its mother!

RESOLUTION

לְעוֹלָם בִּצְבִי הַבָּא עַל הַתְּיִישָׁה, וְרַבָּנַן סַפּוּקֵי מְסַפְּקָא לְהוּ אִי חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב אִי אֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁין.

The Gemara answers: **Actually,** we are dealing **with a deer that mates with a female goat, and the Rabbis are in doubt whether we are concerned for the seed of the father or whether we are not concerned.**

INFERENCE

וּמִדְּלַרַבָּנַן מְסַפְּקָא לְהוּ, לְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר פְּשִׁיטָא לֵיהּ.

And from the fact that the Rabbis are in doubt, it must be that **to Rabbi Eliezer it is certain** that we do not concern ourselves with the father's seed.

OBJECTION

וְהָא דְּתַנְיָא: הַזְּרוֹעַ וְהַלְּחָיַיִם וְהַקֵּבָה נוֹהֲגִים בְּכוּי וּבְכִלְאַיִם.

The Gemara objects: **But that which is taught in a baraita: The foreleg, the cheeks, and the maw** of the priestly gifts **apply to a koy and to a hybrid.**

BRAISA

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר: כִּלְאַיִם הַבָּא מִן הָעֵז וּמִן הָרָחֵל – חַיָּיב בִּמַּתָּנוֹת, מִן הַכּוּי – פָּטוּר מִן הַמַּתָּנוֹת.

Rabbi Eliezer says: A hybrid that comes from a goat and a ewe is obligated in the gifts, but that which comes **from the koy is exempt from the gifts.**

INFERENCE

בְּמַאי עָסְקִינַן? אִילֵימָא בְּתַיִּישׁ הַבָּא עַל הַצְּבִיָּה וְיָלְדָה, בִּשְׁלָמָא לְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר דְּפָטַר, קָסָבַר ״שֶׂה״ וַאֲפִילּוּ מִקְצָת שֶׂה״ לָא אָמְרִינַן.

With what case **are we dealing? If we say** it is **with a male goat that mates with a doe, and she gave birth, it is understandable according to Rabbi Eliezer who exempts** it, for **he holds we do not say "a sheep"** includes **even** that which is only **partially a sheep.**

INFERENCE

אֶלָּא לְרַבָּנַן, נְהִי דְּקָסָבְרִי ״שֶׂה וַאֲפִילּוּ מִקְצָת שֶׂה״, בִּשְׁלָמָא פַּלְגָא לָא יָהֵיב לֵיהּ, אִידַךְ פַּלְגָא לֵימָא לֵיהּ: אַיְיתִי רְאָיָה דְּחוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב, וּשְׁקוֹל.

But according to the Rabbis, granted that they hold "a sheep" includes **even** that which is only **partially a sheep, it is understandable that he does not give him half** the gifts, but as for **the other half, let** the owner **say to** the Kohen: **"Bring proof that we are concerned for the seed of the father, and** then **take** it!" Why then are they fully obligated?

ANSWER

אֶלָּא, בִּצְבִי הַבָּא עַל הַתְּיָישָׁה וְיָלְדָה.

Rather, we must be dealing **with a deer that mates with a female goat, and she gave birth.**

INFERENCE

בְּשִׁלָּמָא לְרַבָּנַן, מַאי "חַיָּיב" – בַּחֲצִי מַתָּנוֹת; אֶלָּא לְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר, לִיחַיַּיב בְּכוּלְּהִי מַתָּנוֹת?

It is understandable according to the Rabbis, for **what is** the meaning of **"liable"?** It means **for half of the gifts. But according to Rabbi Eliezer, let him be liable for all of the gifts,** since the mother is a goat and he does not care about the father's seed!

RESOLUTION

לְעוֹלָם בִּצְבִי הַבָּא עַל הַתְּיָישָׁה וְיָלְדָה, וְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר נָמֵי סָפֵק מְסַפְּקָא לֵיהּ אִי חוֹשְׁשִׁין לְזֶרַע הָאָב אוֹ לָא, וְכֵיוָן דִּלְרַבָּנַן מְסַפְּקָא לְהוּ וּלְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר מְסַפְּקָא לֵיהּ, בְּמַאי פְּלִיגִי?

Actually, we are dealing **with a deer that mates with a female goat, and she gave birth, and Rabbi Eliezer is also in doubt whether we are concerned for the seed of the father or not. And since the Rabbis are in doubt and Rabbi Eliezer is in doubt, in what do they disagree?**

SUMMARY

The Gemara establishes that Shmuel rules in accordance with Chananya, who holds that "oto v'es beno" applies to the father. This leads to a detailed analysis of Rabbi Yehuda's view on whether we ignore the father's seed, concluding that Rabbi Yehuda is actually in doubt on the matter, which prohibits mating a mule with its mother's species. Finally, the Gemara introduces a baraita discussing whether the prohibition of "oto v'es beno" applies to hybrids and the koy, highlighting a dispute between the Rabbis and Rabbi Eliezer.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

In today's sugya, the Gemara delves into a fascinating doubt: do we concern ourselves with the "seed of the father" (chosheshin le'zera ha'av) when determining the identity of an offspring, or do we look only at the mother? We see the Sages and Rabbi Yehuda grappling with cases of mixed parentage, trying to determine the true identity of a creature when its lineage is split. Even when physical signs are obscured, like a mute mule whose ears and tail are lopped off, the Torah demands we look deeper to understand its true nature.

This contains a profound lesson for our own avodah. Every single one of us is a product of different influences. We have a neshama, a pure spark of Hashem, but we also have a physical body and a yetzer hara. Sometimes, we look at ourselves and feel like that "mute mule", our spiritual voice feels silent, our positive signs are hidden, and we feel spiritually compromised or mixed up. We might wonder: "Who am I really? Which side of my lineage defines me?"

The Torah's answer is that we must never ignore our true spiritual heritage. You are the child of the King of kings. No matter how many mixed influences or struggles you carry from the physical world, your primary identity is defined by your divine source. Just as the halacha carefully traces the lineage of every creature to ensure it is treated according to its true identity, you must recognize your own holy pedigree and live up to it.

Today, when you feel conflicted or spiritually sluggish, stop and remind yourself of your true lineage: "I am a child of Hashem, and my neshama is completely pure." Let that realization guide your next action.

הִלְכוֹת עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים · פֶּרֶק שֵׁנִי

Learned like the daf, the literal words in bold, flowing with the elucidation

📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

In this chapter, we delve into the very heart of the prohibition against avodah zarah, learning that Hashem forbade us from serving any created being whatsoever. Even if a person knows in his heart that Hashem is the true Elokim, bowing down to a star, an angel, or any of the elements as an intermediary—just as the generation of Enosh mistakenly did—is still considered actual idol worship. The Torah warns us to guard our thoughts with great yiras Shamayim, so that the "eye of the heart" does not lead us astray to view these creations as independent powers.

To protect our neshamos from the spiritual poison of heresy, the Torah also commands us to distance ourselves completely from the books and ideas of the idolaters. We are forbidden from reading their texts, contemplating their practices, or even looking at the images of their idols. The Rambam teaches us that we must not inquire about their rites even out of mere curiosity, as such thoughts can easily drag a person down and cause him to copy their ways, chas v'shalom.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

הֲלָכָה א

Halacha 1 · The Prohibition to Worship Any Creation Even as an Intermediary

עִקַּר הַצִּוּוּי בַּעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

The essence of the commandment regarding worship of stars

שֶׁלֹּא לַעֲבֹד אֶחָד מִכָּל הַבְּרוּאִים

is **not to serve one of all the creations**,

לֹא מַלְאָךְ וְלֹא גַּלְגַּל וְלֹא כּוֹכָב

not an angel, and not a sphere, and not a star,

וְלֹא אֶחָד מֵאַרְבָּעָה הַיְסוֹדוֹת

and not one of the four elements,

וְלֹא אֶחָד מִכָּל הַנִּבְרָאִים מֵהֶן.

and not one of all the entities created from them.

וְאַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהָעוֹבֵד יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁה' הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים

And even though the worshiper knows that Hashem, He is the God,

וְהוּא עוֹבֵד הַנִּבְרָא הַזֶּה

and he serves this creation

עַל דֶּרֶךְ שֶׁעָבַד אֱנוֹשׁ וַאֲנָשֵׁי דּוֹרוֹ תְּחִלָּה

in the manner that worshiped Enosh and the people of his generation originally,

הֲרֵי זֶה עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים.

behold, this is a worshiper of stars.

וְעִנְיָן זֶה הוּא שֶׁהִזְהִירָה תּוֹרָה עָלָיו וְאָמְרָה

And the matter of this is what the Torah warned about and said:

דברים ד יט "וּפֶן תִּשָּׂא עֵינֶיךָ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְרָאִיתָ אֶת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ" וְגוֹ'

"And lest you lift your eyes heavenward and you see the sun" etc.,

דברים ד יט "אֲשֶׁר חָלַק ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֹתָם לְכֹל הָעַמִּים".

"which Hashem your God apportioned them to all the nations."

כְּלוֹמַר שֶׁמָּא תָּשׁוּט בְּעֵין לִבְּךָ

Meaning to say, lest you wander with the eye of your heart

וְתִרְאֶה שֶׁאֵלּוּ הֵן הַמַּנְהִיגִים אֶת הָעוֹלָם

and you see that these, they are the leaders of the world,

וְהֵם שֶׁחָלַק ה' אוֹתָם לְכָל הָעוֹלָם

and they are what Hashem apportioned to all the world

לִהְיוֹת חַיִּים וְהוֹוִים וְאֵינָם נִפְסָדִים כְּמִנְהָגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם

to be alive and existing and not perishing like the custom of the world,

וְתֹאמַר שֶׁרָאוּי לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹות לָהֶם וּלְעָבְדָן.

and you will say that it is worthy to bow down to them and to serve them.

וּבָעִנְיָן הַזֶּה צִוָּה וְאָמַר

And regarding this matter He commanded and said:

דברים יא טז "הִשָּׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פֶּן יִפְתֶּה לְבַבְכֶם".

"Be careful for yourselves lest your heart will be enticed."

כְּלוֹמַר שֶׁלֹּא תִּטְעוּ בְּהִרְהוּר הַלֵּב

Meaning to say, that you do not err in the thought of the heart

לַעֲבֹד אֵלּוּ לִהְיוֹת סַרְסוּר בֵּינֵיכֶם וּבֵין הַבּוֹרֵא:

to serve these to be an intermediary between you and the Creator.

הֲלָכָה ב

Halacha 2 · The Prohibition of Reading Books of Idol Worship and Inquiring into Its Rites

סְפָרִים רַבִּים חִבְּרוּ עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים בַּעֲבוֹדָתָהּ

Many books were composed by the worshipers of stars concerning its service,

הֵיאַךְ עִקַּר עֲבוֹדָתָהּ וּמַה מַּעֲשֶׂיהָ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ.

explaining how is the essence of its service, and what are its practices and its statutes.

צִוָּנוּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁלֹּא לִקְרוֹת בְּאוֹתָן הַסְּפָרִים כְּלָל

Therefore, the Holy One, blessed is He, commanded us not to read in those books at all,

וְלֹא נְהַרְהֵר בָּהּ וְלֹא בְּדָבָר מִדְּבָרֶיהָ.

and we shall not think about it, nor about any matter of its matters.

וַאֲפִלּוּ לְהִסְתַּכֵּל בִּדְמוּת הַצּוּרָה אָסוּר

And even to look at the likeness of the image of an idol is forbidden,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "אַל תִּפְנוּ אֶל הָאֱלִילִים".

as it is said in the Torah, "Do not turn to the idols."

וּבָעִנְיָן הַזֶּה נֶאֱמַר "וּפֶן תִּדְרֹשׁ לֵאלֹהֵיהֶם לֵאמֹר אֵיכָה יַעַבְדוּ",

And in this matter it is said, "And lest you seek concerning their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve them?'"

שֶׁלֹּא תִּשְׁאַל עַל דֶּרֶךְ עֲבוֹדָתָהּ הֵיאַךְ הִיא

This warns that you shall not inquire about the way of its service, how it is performed,

אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֵין אַתָּה עוֹבְדָהּ,

even though you do not serve it yourself.

שֶׁדָּבָר זֶה גּוֹרֵם לְהִפָּנוֹת אַחֲרֶיהָ

The reason is for this matter causes a person to turn after it

וְלַעֲשׂוֹת כְּמָה שֶׁהֵן עוֹשִׂין

and to do like what they do,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְאֶעֱשֶׂה כֵּן גַּם אָנִי:

as it is said at the end of that verse, "and I will do so also I."

וְכָל הַלָּאוִין הָאֵלּוּ בְּעִנְיָן אֶחָד הֵן

And all of these prohibitions mentioned in the previous halachos **are in one concept,**

וְהוּא שֶׁלֹּא יִפְנֶה אַחַר עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

and it is that one should not turn after the worship of stars;

וְכָל הַנִּפְנֶה אַחֲרֶיהָ בְּדֶרֶךְ שֶׁהוּא עוֹשֶׂה בּוֹ מַעֲשֶׂה חֶרֶי זֶה לוֹקֶה.

and anyone who turns after it in a way that he does an action in it, behold, this one receives lashes.

וְלֹא עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים בִּלְבַד הוּא שֶׁאָסוּר לְהִפָּנוֹת אַחֲרֶיהָ בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה

And not worship of stars alone is it that is forbidden to turn after in thought,

אֶלָּא כָּל מַחֲשָׁבָה שֶׁהוּא גּוֹרֵם לוֹ לָאָדָם לַעֲקֹר עִקָּר מֵעִקְּרֵי הַתּוֹרָה

rather, any thought that causes a person to uproot a principle from the principles of the Torah,

מְזֻהָרִין אָנוּ שֶׁלֹּא לְהַעֲלוֹתָהּ עַל לִבֵּנוּ

we are warned not to bring it up upon our heart,

וְלֹא נַסִּיחַ דַּעְתֵּנוּ לְכָךְ וְנַחְשֹׁב וְנִמָּשֵׁךְ אַחַר הִרְהוּרֵי הַלֵּב.

and we shall not divert our mind to this and think and be drawn after the thoughts of the heart.

מִפְּנֵי שֶׁדַּעְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם קְצָרָה

This is **because the mind of man is limited,**

וְלֹא כָּל הַדֵּעוֹת יְכוֹלִין לְהַשִּׂיג הָאֱמֶת עַל בָּרְיוֹ.

and not all minds are able to comprehend the truth upon its clarity.

וְאִם יִמָּשֵׁךְ כָּל אָדָם אַחַר מַחְשָׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ

And if every man will be drawn after the thoughts of his heart,

נִמְצָא מַחֲרִיב אֶת הָעוֹלָם לְפִי קִצְּר דַּעְתּוֹ.

he is found destroying the world according to the limitation of his mind.

כֵּיצַד.

How so?

פְּעָמִים יָתוּר אַחַר עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

Sometimes he will stray after the worship of stars,

וּפְעָמִים יַחְשֹׁב בְּיִחוּד הַבּוֹרֵא שֶׁמָּא הוּא שֶׁמָּא אֵינוֹ.

and sometimes he will think about the oneness of the Creator, perhaps He is, perhaps He is not;

מַה לְמַעְלָה וּמַה לְמַטָּה מַה לְפָנִים וּמַה לְאָחוֹר.

what is above and what is below, what is before and what is behind.

וּפְעָמִים בַּנְּבוּאָה שֶׁמָּא הִיא אֱמֶת שֶׁמָּא הִיא אֵינָהּ.

And sometimes in prophecy, perhaps it is truth, perhaps it is not.

וּפְעָמִים בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁמָּא הִיא מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם שֶׁמָּא אֵינָהּ.

And sometimes in the Torah, perhaps it is from Heaven, perhaps it is not.

וְאֵינוֹ יוֹדֵעַ הַמִּדּוֹת שֶׁיָּדִין בָּהֶן עַד שֶׁיֵּדַע הָאֱמֶת עַל בֵּרְיוֹ

And he does not know the measures with which he should judge until he will know the truth upon its clarity,

וְנִמְצָא יוֹצֵא לִידֵי מִינוּת.

and he is found going out to the hands of heresy.

וְעַל עִנְיָן זֶה הִזְהִירָה תּוֹרָה וְנֶאֱמַר בָּהּ במדבר טו לט "וְלֹא תָתֻרוּ אַחֲרֵי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם זֹנִים".

And upon this matter the Torah warned, and it is said in it, "And do not stray after your heart and after your eyes which you go astray after."

כְּלוֹמַר לֹא יִמָּשֵׁךְ כָּל אֶחָד מִכֶּם אַחַר דַּעְתּוֹ הַקְּצָרָה

Meaning, each one of you shall not be drawn after his limited mind,

וְיִדַּמֶּה שֶׁמַּחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ מַשֶּׂגֶת הָאֱמֶת.

and imagine that his thought comprehends the truth.

כָּךְ אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים גמרא ברכות יב ב "אַחֲרֵי לְבַבְכֶם זוֹ מִינוּת" וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם זוֹ זְנוּת.

Thus said the Sages: "'After your heart'—this is heresy; 'and after your eyes'—this is immorality."

וְלָאו זֶה אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהוּא גּוֹרֵם לָאָדָם לְטָרְדוֹ מִן הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא

And this prohibition, even though it causes a person to banish him from the World to Come,

אֵין בּוֹ מַלְקוּת:

there are no lashes for it because it does not involve a physical action.

הֲלָכָה ד

Halacha 4 · The Severity of Idol Worship as Equivalent to the Entire Torah

מִצְוַת עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים כְּנֶגֶד הַמִּצְוֹת כֻּלָּן הִיא

The commandment of the prohibition of **worship of stars is equivalent to** all of **the commandments, all of them** combined, **it** is so severe,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וְכִי תִשְׁגּוּ וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֵת כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת" וְגוֹ'

as it is said in the Torah, **"And if you err and do not perform all of these commandments" etc.**

וּמִפִּי הַשְּׁמוּעָה לָמְדוּ שֶׁבַּעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר.

And from the mouth of the tradition, our Sages **learned that regarding worship of stars the verse speaks** here, equating this one sin to violating all the mitzvos.

הָא לָמַדְתָּ שֶׁכָּל הַמּוֹדֶה בַּעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

Behold, you have learned from this **that anyone who acknowledges** the truth of **worship of stars**

כּוֹפֵר בְּכָל הַתּוֹרָה כֻּלָּהּ וּבְכָל הַנְּבִיאִים

denies all of the Torah entirely, and all of the prophets,

וּבְכָל מַה שֶּׁנִּצְטַוּוּ הַנְּבִיאִים מֵאָדָם וְעַד סוֹף הָעוֹלָם

and all of what that were commanded the prophets from Adam and until the end of the world,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "מִן הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' וָהָלְאָה לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם".

as it is said in the continuation of the verse, **"from the day which commanded Hashem and onward for your generations."**

וְכָל הַכּוֹפֵר בַּעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

And conversely, **anyone who denies** and rejects **worship of stars**

מוֹדֶה בְּכָל הַתּוֹרָה כֻּלָּהּ וּבְכָל הַנְּבִיאִים

acknowledges all of the Torah entirely, and all of the prophets,

וּבְכָל מַה שֶּׁנִּצְטַוּוּ הַנְּבִיאִים מֵאָדָם וְעַד סוֹף הָעוֹלָם

and all of what that were commanded the prophets from Adam and until the end of the world,

וְהוּא עִקַּר כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת כֻּלָּן:

and it is the root of all of the commandments, all of them.

הֲלָכָה ה

Halacha 5 · The Halachic Status of a Jewish Idolater and a Heretic

יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁעָבַד עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

A Jew who served worship of stars

הֲרֵי הוּא כְּעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים לְכָל דְּבָרָיו

behold he is like a worshiper of stars for all his matters,

וְאֵינוֹ כְּיִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁעוֹבֵר עֲבֵרָה שֶׁיֵּשׁ בָּהּ סְקִילָה.

and he is not like a Jew who transgresses a transgression that has in it stoning.

מוּמָר לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים הֲרֵי הוּא מוּמָר לְכָל הַתּוֹרָה כֻּלָּהּ.

An apostate to worship of stars, behold he is an apostate for all of the Torah entirely.

וְכֵן הָאֶפִּיקוֹרְסִים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֵינָן כְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לְדָבָר מִן הַדְּבָרִים

And likewise the heretics from Israel are not like a Jew for any matter of the matters,

וְאֵין מְקַבְּלִים אוֹתָם בִּתְשׁוּבָה לְעוֹלָם

and we do not accept them in repentance ever,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר משלי ב יט "כָּל בָּאֶיהָ לֹא יְשׁוּבוּן וְלֹא יַשִּׂיגוּ אָרְחוֹת חַיִּים".

as it is said in Mishlei, "all who come to her will not return and they will not attain the paths of life."

וְהָאֶפִּיקוֹרְסִים הֵם הַתָּרִים אַחַר מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבָּם בְּסִכְלוּת דְּבָרִים שֶׁאָמַרְנוּ

And the heretics, they are those who stray after the thoughts of their heart in the foolishness of matters that we said,

עַד שֶׁנִּמְצְאוּ עוֹבְרִים עַל גּוּפֵי תּוֹרָה לְהַכְעִיס בִּשְׁאָט נֶפֶשׁ בְּיָד רָמָה

until they are found transgressing against the bodies of Torah to anger with contempt of soul with a hand high,

וְאוֹמְרִים שֶׁאֵין בָּזֶה עָוֹן.

and they say that there is not in this sin.

וְאָסוּר לְסַפֵּר עִמָּהֶן וּלְהָשִׁיב עֲלֵיהֶן תְּשׁוּבָה כְּלָל

And it is forbidden to speak with them and to return to them an answer at all,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר משלי ה ח "וְאַל תִּקְרַב אֶל פֶּתַח בֵּיתָהּ".

as it is said in Mishlei, "and do not draw near to the entrance of her house."

וּמַחֲשָׁבָה שֶׁל אֶפִּיקוֹרוֹס לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים:

And the thought of a heretic is for worship of stars.

הֲלָכָה ו

Halacha 6 · One Who Acknowledges Idolatry and the Law of the Blasphemer

כָּל הַמּוֹדֶה בַּעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁהִיא אֱמֶת

Any who acknowledges the worship of stars, believing **that it is truth,**

אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא עֲבָדָהּ

even though he **did not** actually **worship it,**

הֲרֵי זֶה מְחָרֵף וּמְגַדֵּף אֶת הַשֵּׁם הַנִּכְבָּד וְהַנּוֹרָא.

behold, this one disgraces and blasphemes the Name, the glorious and the awesome.

וְאֶחָד הָעוֹבֵד עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְאֶחָד הַמְגַדֵּף אֶת ה'

And both the one who worships the worship of stars, and both the one who blasphemes Hashem, are equated in the Torah,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וְהַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה בְיָד רָמָה מִן הָאֶזְרָח וּמִן הַגֵּר אֶת ה' הוּא מְגַדֵּף".

as it is said in the Torah in Sefer Bamidbar: **"And the soul that acts with a high hand, from the native and from the convert, Hashem he blasphemes."**

לְפִיכָךְ תּוֹלִין עוֹבֵד עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁתּוֹלִין אֶת הַמְגַדֵּף

Therefore, we hang a worshipper of the worship of stars, just as we hang the blasphemer,

וּשְׁנֵיהֶם נִסְקָלִין.

and both of them are stoned by Beis Din.

וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה כָּלַלְתִּי דִּין הַמְגַדֵּף בְּהִלְכוֹת עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

And because of this, I included the law of the blasphemer in the Laws of the worship of stars,

שֶׁשְּׁנֵיהֶם כּוֹפְרִים בָּעִקָּר הֵם:

since both of them are deniers of the fundamental principle of our emunah.

הֲלָכָה ז

Halacha 7 · The Laws of a Blasphemer and the Divine Names for Which One is Stoned

וְאֵלּוּ הֵן דִּינֵי הַמְגַדֵּף.

And these are the laws of the blasphemer:

אֵין הַמְגַדֵּף חַיָּב סְקִילָה

The blasphemer is not liable to stoning

עַד שֶׁיְּפָרֵשׁ אֶת הַשֵּׁם הַמְיֻחָד שֶׁל אַרְבַּע אוֹתִיּוֹת

until he pronounces — the Unique Name of four letters,

שֶׁהוּא אָלֶ"ף

which is Aleph Dalet Nun Yod,

וְיִבָּרֵךְ אוֹתוֹ בְּשֵׁם מִן הַשֵּׁמוֹת שֶׁאֵינָם נִמְחָקִים

and curses it with a Name from the Names that are not erased,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וְנֹקֵב שֵׁם ה'",

as it is said in the Torah, "And he who blasphemes the Name of Hashem shall surely be put to death."

עַל הַשֵּׁם הַמְיֻחָד חַיָּב סְקִילָה

Thus, for blaspheming the Unique Name, he is liable to stoning,

וְעַל שְׁאָר הַכִּנּוּיִים בְּאַזְהָרָה.

and for the rest of the appellations, he violates a prohibition but is not stoned.

וְיֵשׁ מִי שֶׁמְּפָרֵשׁ שֶׁאֵינוֹ חַיָּב אֶלָּא עַל שֵׁם יוּ

And there is one who explains that he is not liable to stoning except for blaspheming the Name Yod Heh Vav Heh,

וַאֲנִי אוֹמֵר שֶׁעַל שְׁנֵיהֶם הוּא נִסְקָל:

and I say that for both of them, whether he blasphemed the Name Aleph Dalet Nun Yod or the Name Yod Heh Vav Heh, he is stoned.

הֲלָכָה ח

Halacha 8 · The Warning Against Blasphemy and the Procedure for Examining the Witnesses

אַזְהָרָה שֶׁל מְגַדֵּף מִנַּיִן

The warning in the Torah of a blasphemer, prohibiting this sin, is from where do we derive it? It is

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר שמות כב כז "אֱלֹהִים לֹא תְקַלֵּל".

as it is said in the pasuk in Shemos 22:27, "God, you shall not curse."

בְּכָל יוֹם וָיוֹם בּוֹדְקִין אֶת הָעֵדִים בְּכִנּוּיִים

During the trial, on every day and day of the cross-examination, they examine the witnesses with nicknames, substituting a pseudonym for the Holy Name so they do not utter a blasphemy in court, using the formula:

יַכֶּה יוֹסִי אֶת יוֹסִי.

"May Yosse strike Yosse," where "Yosse" is used as a substitute for Hashem's Name.

נִגְמַר הַדִּין

Once **the judgment is finished** and they are ready to render the verdict, they must hear the exact words of blasphemy. Therefore,

מוֹצִיאִין אֶת כָּל אָדָם לַחוּץ

they remove every person outside the courtroom, so that the Holy Name is not desecrated in public,

וְשׁוֹאֲלִים אֶת הַגָּדוֹל שֶׁבָּעֵדִים

and they ask the greatest, most prominent **who is among the witnesses**,

וְאוֹמְרִים לוֹ אֱמֹר מַה שֶּׁשָּׁמַעְתָּ בְּפֵרוּשׁ

and they say to him, "Say what you heard explicitly," using the actual Name that was blasphemed,

וְהוּא אוֹמֵר

and he says it.

וְהַדַּיָּנִים עוֹמְדִים עַל רַגְלֵיהֶם וְקוֹרְעִין וְלֹא מְאַחִין.

Upon hearing the blasphemy, **the judges stand on their feet and rend** their garments in mourning, **and** these tears they **do not mend** ever again.

וְהָעֵד הַשֵּׁנִי אוֹמֵר אַף אֲנִי כְּמוֹתוֹ שָׁמַעְתִּי.

And the second witness says, "Even I, like him, heard it," without having to repeat the explicit Name.

וְאִם הָיוּ עֵדִים רַבִּים

And if there were many witnesses,

צָרִיךְ כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מֵהֶן לוֹמַר כָּזֶה שָׁמַעְתִּי:

every one and one of them needs to say, "Like this I heard."

הֲלָכָה ט

Halacha 9 · The Law of a Blasphemer Who Retracts and One Who Blasphemes with an Idol's Name

מְגַדֵּף שֶׁחָזַר בּוֹ בְּתוֹךְ כְּדֵי דִּבּוּר

A blasphemer who retracted his blasphemy **within the time of speaking**, which is the time it takes a disciple to greet his teacher,

אֵינוֹ כְּלוּם

his retraction **is nothing** and does not save him from punishment,

אֲלָא כֵּיוָן שֶׁגִּדֵּף בְּעֵדִים נִסְקָל.

rather, once he blasphemed in the presence of **witnesses, he is stoned** by the Beis Din.

מִי שֶׁגִּדֵּף אֶת הַשֵּׁם בְּשֵׁם עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

One who blasphemed the Name of Hashem **with the name of** an idol of **worship of stars**, by using the idol's name to curse Hashem,

קַנָּאִים פּוֹגְעִים בּוֹ וְהוֹרְגִים אוֹתוֹ.

zealots who are filled with holy wrath for Hashem's honor may **strike him and kill him** on the spot.

וְאִם לֹא הֲרָגוּהוּ קַנָּאִים

And if the **zealots did not kill him** at the time of the act,

וּבָא לְבֵית דִּין

and he came to the house of judgment to be tried,

אֵינוֹ נִסְקָל עַד שֶׁיְּבָרֵךְ בְּשֵׁם מִן הַשֵּׁמוֹת הַמְיֻחָדִים:

he is not stoned by the court **until he blesses**, which is a euphemism for cursing, **with a name from the Names that are unique** to Hashem, and not by using the name of an idol.

הֲלָכָה י

Halacha 10 · The Obligation to Rend Garments for Blasphemy and Placing Hands on the Condemned

כָּל הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ בִּרְכַּת הַשֵּׁם חַיָּב לִקְרֹעַ

Anyone **who hears blasphemy of the Name** of Hashem **is obligated to rend** his garments in mourning,

וַאֲפִלּוּ עַל בִּרְכַּת הַכִּנּוּיִין חַיָּב לִקְרֹעַ

and even upon blasphemy of the descriptive terms of Hashem, one **is obligated to rend** his garments.

וְהוּא שֶׁיִּשְׁמָעֶנָּה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל.

And this is specifically **when he hears it from a Jew.**

אֶחָד הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ וְאֶחָד הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ מִפִּי הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ חַיָּב לִקְרֹעַ.

Whether the direct **hearer** of the blasphemy **or the one who hears from the mouth of the hearer** who is repeating what happened, each **is obligated to rend** his garments.

אֲבָל הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ מִפִּי הָעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים אֵינוֹ חַיָּב לִקְרֹעַ.

But one who hears it directly **from the mouth of the worshiper of stars is not obligated to rend** his garments.

וְלֹא קָרְעוּ אֶלְיָקִים וְשֶׁבְנָא אֶלָּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁרַבְשָׁקֵה הָיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל מוּמָר.

And not did rend Elyakim and Shevna their garments when they heard the blasphemy of Ravshakeh, **except because that Ravshakeh was a Jew apostate,** and therefore they were obligated to rend.

כָּל הָעֵדִים וְהַדַּיָּנִים סוֹמְכִים אֶת יְדֵיהֶם אֶחָד אֶחָד עַל רֹאשׁ הַמְגַדֵּף

All the witnesses and the judges place their hands, one by one, upon the head of the blasphemer before he is executed,

וְאוֹמֵר לוֹ דָּמְךָ בְּרֹאשְׁךָ שֶׁאַתָּה גָּרַמְתָּ לְךָ.

and say to him, "Your blood is on your head, for you caused it to yourself."

וְאֵין בְּכָל הַרוּגֵי בֵּית דִּין מִי שֶׁסּוֹמְכִים עָלָיו אֶלָּא מְגַדֵּף בִּלְבַד

And there is not among all those executed by the **house of law anyone that they place hands upon him except** the **blasphemer alone,**

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְסָמְכוּ כָל הַשֹּׁמְעִים אֶת יְדֵיהֶם:

as it is said in the Torah regarding the blasphemer, **"and shall place all the hearers their hands** upon his head."

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter outlines the strict prohibitions against engaging with avodah zarah in thought, speech, or deed. We learn that any action showing interest in these false beliefs is forbidden, and one who performs an action reflecting this concern receives lashes. Ultimately, the Torah warns us to guard our minds from any thoughts or philosophical inquiries that could uproot the fundamental principles of our holy faith, ensuring our hearts remain entirely pure and devoted to Hashem alone.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The core of the prohibition against avodah zarah is not just about bowing to a physical statue; it is about the subtle temptation to look for intermediaries. The Torah warns us, 'Be very careful that your heart not be tempted,' which Chazal explain as a warning not to let our thoughts wander after our own limited understanding. When we look at the natural systems of the world, our careers, our doctors, our financial efforts, or even spiritual forces, and treat them as independent powers that we must appease, we are falling into the very trap that Enosh and his generation fell into. We must remember that every single force in creation is merely an axe in the hand of the hewer, completely subservient to Hashem.

Furthermore, the Rambam teaches us a profound rule about the human mind: 'the mind of man is short.' We are forbidden from filling our heads with foreign philosophies, secular skepticism, or looking at things that pull our hearts away from pure emunah. The yetzer hara tries to convince us that we can explore every doubt and read every cynical book without being affected. But the Torah knows our nature. If you let your mind wander into places of doubt, wondering 'maybe it is true, maybe it is not', you will eventually be drawn after the desires of your heart and damage your yiras Shamayim. Guarding our thoughts is the ultimate boundary that keeps our relationship with Hashem pure.

To live this today, choose one area where you feel anxious or dependent on a human intermediary, whether it is a business partner, a medical treatment, or a personal connection, and consciously declare: 'This is only a vessel. Hashem alone is the source of my blessing, and I trust in Him directly without any intermediaries.'

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📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

We begin our learning of Pirkei Avos by establishing the golden chain of the mesorah, tracing how Moshe Rabbeinu received the Torah at Sinai and passed it down through the generations. This holy transmission went from Yehoshua to the elders, the prophets, and the Men of the Great Assembly, showing us that our oral tradition is unbroken and divine. From there, the chapter introduces the early pairs of Sages, the Zugos, who carried the torch of Torah with immense holiness.

As we delve into their teachings, we find fundamental guidance for our daily avodah and yiras Shamayim. The Sages guide us on how to build a home of Torah, how to conduct ourselves in judgment, how to treat our fellow Jews with warmth, and how to guard our speech. We are introduced to the timeless wisdom of Hillel and Shammai, who teach us the path of peace, diligence in learning, and serving Hashem with absolute sincerity.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

משנה א

הַשַּׁלְשֶׁלֶת שֶׁל קַבָּלַת הַתּוֹרָה וְהַנְהָגַת הַחֲכָמִים

Mishna 1 · The Chain of Torah Transmission and the Three Directives of the Great Assembly

משֶׁה קִבֵּל תּוֹרָה מִסִּינַי, וּמְסָרָהּ לִיהוֹשֻׁעַ, וִיהוֹשֻׁעַ לִזְקֵנִים, וְזִקֵנִים

Moshe received Torah from Sinai and transmitted it to Yehoshua and Yehoshua to the elders and the elders

לִנְבִיאִים, וּנְבִיאִים מְסָרוּהָ לְאַנְשֵׁי כְנֶסֶת הַגְּדוֹלָה. הֵם אָמְרוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה

to the prophets and the prophets transmitted it to the Men of the Assembly the Great They said three

דְבָרִים, הֱווּ מְתוּנִים בַּדִּין, וְהַעֲמִידוּ תַלְמִידִים הַרְבֵּה, וַעֲשׂוּ סְיָג

things Be deliberate in judgment and establish disciples many and make a fence

לַתּוֹרָה:

for the Torah

> *This Mishnah establishes the unbroken chain of Torah transmission from Sinai down to the Sages of the Great Assembly, who provided foundational guidance for judges and teachers.*

משנה ב

הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁעֲלֵיהֶם הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד

Mishna 2 · The Three Pillars Upon Which the World Stands

שִׁמְעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק הָיָה מִשִּׁיָרֵי כְנֶסֶת הַגְּדוֹלָה. הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, עַל

Shimon the Righteous was from the remnants of the Assembly the Great he would say on

שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת

three things the world stands on the Torah and on the Temple service and on acts of

חֲסָדִים:

kindness

> *Shimon the Righteous teaches that the existence of the world depends upon Torah study, the Temple service, and acts of lovingkindness.*

מִשְׁנָה ג

עֲבוֹדַת הַשֵּׁם מֵאַהֲבָה וּמוֹרָא שָׁמַיִם

Mishna 3 · Serving Hashem Out of Love and the Fear of Heaven

אַנְטִיגְנוֹס אִישׁ סוֹכוֹ קִבֵּל מִשִּׁמְעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק. הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, אַל תִּהְיוּ

be do not say would he the Righteous from Shimon received Socho a man of Antigonus

כַּעֲבָדִים הַמְשַׁמְּשִׁין אֶת הָרַב עַל מְנָת לְקַבֵּל פְּרָס, אֶלָּא הֱווּ כַּעֲבָדִים

like servants be but a reward to receive condition on the master — who serve like servants

הַמְשַׁמְּשִׁין אֶת הָרַב שֶׁלֹּא עַל מְנָת לְקַבֵּל פְּרָס, וִיהִי מוֹרָא שָׁמַיִם

Heaven the fear of and let be a reward to receive condition on not the master — who serve

עֲלֵיכֶם:

upon you

Antigonus of Socho teaches that one should serve Hashem without the expectation of receiving a reward, while maintaining a constant fear of Heaven.

מִשְׁנָה ד

קַבָּלַת הַתּוֹרָה וּכְבוֹד חֲכָמִים

Mishna 4 · The Transmission of Torah and Honoring the Sages

יוֹסֵי בֶן יוֹעֶזֶר אִישׁ צְרֵדָה וְיוֹסֵי בֶן יוֹחָנָן אִישׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יוֹסֵי

Yose from them received Yerushalayim man of Yochanan ben and Yose Zeredah man of Yoezer ben Yose

בֶן יוֹעֶזֶר אִישׁ צְרֵדָה אוֹמֵר, יְהִי בֵיתְךָ בֵּית וַעַד לַחֲכָמִים, וֶהֱוֵי

and be for the Sages meeting a house of your house let be says Zeredah man of Yoezer ben

מִתְאַבֵּק בַּעֲפַר רַגְלֵיהֶם, וֶהֱוֵי שׁוֹתֶה בְצָמָא אֶת דִּבְרֵיהֶם:

their words — with thirst drinking and be their feet in the dust of attaching yourself

Yose ben Yoezer and Yose ben Yochanan transmit the tradition, advising one to make their home a gathering place for Sages.

מִשְׁנָה ה

הַכְנָסַת אוֹרְחִים וּמְעוּט שִׂיחָה עִם הָאִשָּׁה

Mishna 5 · Hospitality to the Poor and Limiting Conversation with Women

יוֹסֵי בֶן יוֹחָנָן אִישׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אוֹמֵר, יְהִי בֵיתְךָ פָּתוּחַ לְרִוָחָה, וְיִהְיוּ

and let be wide open your house let be says Yerushalayim a man of Yochanan son of Yose

עֲנִיִּים בְּנֵי בֵיתֶךָ, וְאַל תַּרְבֶּה שִׂיחָה עִם הָאִשָּׁה. בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ אָמְרוּ,

they said with his wife the woman with conversation increase and do not your household members of poor people

קַל וָחֹמֶר בְּאֵשֶׁת חֲבֵרוֹ. מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים, כָּל זְמַן שֶׁאָדָם מַרְבֶּה

increases that a man the time all the Sages said from here his fellow with the wife of and heavy a light

שִׂיחָה עִם הָאִשָּׁה, גּוֹרֵם רָעָה לְעַצְמוֹ, וּבוֹטֵל מִדִּבְרֵי תוֹרָה, וְסוֹפוֹ

and his end Torah from words of and desists to himself evil he causes the woman with conversation

יוֹרֵשׁ גֵּיהִנֹּם:

Gehinnom he inherits

Yose ben Yochanan teaches the importance of keeping a home open to the poor and warns against excessive conversation with women, which distracts from Torah study.

מִשְׁנָה ו

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב וּקְנֵה לְךָ חָבֵר

Mishna 6 · Appointing a Teacher, Acquiring a Companion, and Judging Others Favorably

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה וְנִתַּאי הָאַרְבֵּלִי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה אוֹמֵר,

says Perachyah son of Yehoshua from them received the Arbelite and Nittai Perachyah son of Yehoshua

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב, וּקְנֵה לְךָ חָבֵר, וֶהֱוֵי דָן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם

man every — judging and be a companion for yourself and acquire a teacher for yourself make

לְכַף זְכוּת:

merit to the scale of

This Mishnah teaches the importance of spiritual mentorship, friendship, and giving others the benefit of the doubt.

משנה ז

הַרְחֶק מִשָּׁכֵן רָע וּמֵרָשָׁע

Mishna 7 · Distancing Oneself from an Evil Neighbor and the Wicked

נִתַּאי הָאַרְבֵּלִי אוֹמֵר, הַרְחֵק מִשָּׁכֵן רָע, וְאַל תִּתְחַבֵּר לָרָשָׁע,

with the wicked associate and do not who is evil from a neighbor distance yourself says the Arbelite Nittai

וְאַל תִּתְיָאֵשׁ מִן הַפֻּרְעָנוּת:

retribution of despair and do not

Nittai the Arbelite warns against associating with bad influences and reminds us that divine justice is inevitable.

משנה ח

הַנְהָגַת הַדַּיָּן עִם בַּעֲלֵי הַדִּין

Mishna 8 · The Conduct of a Judge Toward Litigants

יְהוּדָה בֶן טַבַּאי וְשִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן שָׁטָח קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוּדָה בֶן טַבַּאי אוֹמֵר,

says Tabbai son of Yehudah from them received Shetach son of and Shimon Tabbai son of Yehudah

אַל תַּעַשׂ עַצְמְךָ כְּעוֹרְכֵי הַדַּיָּנִין. וּכְשֶׁיִּהְיוּ בַעֲלֵי דִינִין עוֹמְדִים

standing judgment the masters of and when are the judges like the arrangers of yourself make do not

לְפָנֶיךָ, יִהְיוּ בְעֵינֶיךָ כִּרְשָׁעִים. וּכְשֶׁנִּפְטָרִים מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יִהְיוּ

they should be before you like wicked ones in your eyes they should be from before you and when they are dismissed

בְעֵינֶיךָ כִּזְכָאִין, כְּשֶׁקִּבְּלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת הַדִּין:

the judgment — upon themselves when they accepted like innocent ones in your eyes

Yehudah ben Tabbai teaches that a judge must remain completely impartial, avoiding advocacy and viewing both parties equally during and after the trial.

משנה ט

דְּרִישָׁה וַחֲקִירָה שֶׁל עֵדִים וְזְהִירוּת בְּדִבְרֵי הַדַּיָּנִים

Mishna 9 · Thorough Interrogation of Witnesses and Caution in the Words of Judges

שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן שָׁטָח אוֹמֵר, הֱוֵי מַרְבֶּה לַחְקֹר אֶת הָעֵדִים, וֶהֱוֵי זָהִיר

careful and be the witnesses — to investigate much be says Shetach son of Shimon

בִּדְבָרֶיךָ, שֶׁמָּא מִתּוֹכָם יִלְמְדוּ לְשַׁקֵּר:

to lie they will learn from within them lest with your words

Shimon ben Shetach warns judges to cross-examine witnesses thoroughly and to speak carefully so as not to inadvertently teach them how to fabricate testimony.

מִשְׁנָה י

אַהֲבַת הַמְּלָאכָה וּשְׂנִיאַת הָרַבָּנוּת

Mishna 10 · Loving Work and Shunning Lordship and Government Intimacy

שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. שְׁמַעְיָה אוֹמֵר, אֱהֹב אֶת הַמְּלָאכָה, וּשְׂנָא אֶת

Shemaiah — Shemaiah says love — and hate work — and Abtalion from them received

הָרַבָּנוּת, וְאַל תִּתְוַדַּע לָרָשׁוּת:

lordship and do not make yourself known to the ruling authority

Shemaiah and Abtalion teach the importance of honest labor, avoiding positions of power, and keeping a safe distance from the ruling authorities.

מִשְׁנָה יא

אַזְהָרָה לַחֲכָמִים לְהִזָּהֵר בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם מִפְּנֵי חִלּוּל הַשֵּׁם

Mishna 11 · A Warning to Sages to Guard Their Words to Prevent Desecration of Heaven's Name

אַבְטַלְיוֹן אוֹמֵר, חֲכָמִים, הִזָּהֲרוּ בְּדִבְרֵיכֶם, שֶׁמָּא תָּחוּבוּ חוֹבַת גָּלוּת

Avtalyon says Sages, be careful with your words lest you will obligate the obligation of exile

וְתִגְלוּ לִמְקוֹם מַיִם הָרָעִים, וְיִשְׁתּוּ הַתַּלְמִידִים הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיכֶם

and you will be exiled to a place of the evil waters and they will drink the disciples who come after you

וְיָמוּתוּ, וְנִמְצָא שֵׁם שָׁמַיִם מִתְחַלֵּל:

and they will die and it will be found the Name of Heaven is profaned

Avtalyon warns Torah scholars to speak with extreme precision so that heretical disciples do not misinterpret their words and stray after false doctrines.

מִשְׁנָה יב

הַנְהָגַת הִלֵּל לֶאֱהֹב שָׁלוֹם וּלְקָרֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת

Mishna 12 · The Conduct of Hillel to Love Peace and Draw Creations Close to Torah

הִלֵּל וְשַׁמַּאי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. הִלֵּל אוֹמֵר, הֱוֵי מִתַּלְמִידָיו שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן, אוֹהֵב

Hillel and Shammai received from them Hillel says be from the disciples of Aharon loving

שָׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שָׁלוֹם, אוֹהֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת וּמְקָרְבָן לַתּוֹרָה:

peace and pursuing peace loving — the creations and drawing them close to the Torah

Hillel teaches that one should emulate Aharon the Kohen Gadol by actively pursuing peace and bringing people closer to the Torah through love.

מִשְׁנָה יג

הַסַּכָּנָה בְּגַאֲוָה וּבְבִטּוּל תּוֹרָה

Mishna 13 · The Danger of Seeking Fame and Neglecting Torah Study

הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, נָגַד שְׁמָא, אָבַד שְׁמֵהּ. וּדְלֹא מוֹסִיף, יָסֵף.

He used to say one who makes great his name destroys his name and one who does not add ceases

וּדְלֹא יָלַיִף, קְטָלָא חַיָּב. וּדְאִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בְּתָגָא, חָלַף:

and one who does not learn deserves death and one who makes use of the crown passes away

This Mishnah warns against using Torah knowledge for self-aggrandizement and emphasizes the necessity of continuous study.

מִשְׁנָה יד

הַחוֹבָה לִפְעֹל בְּעַצְמוֹ וּלְלֹא דְחוּי

Mishna 14 · The Obligation of Personal Responsibility and Avoiding Procrastination

הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, אִם אֵין אֲנִי לִי, מִי לִי. וּכְשֶׁאֲנִי לְעַצְמִי, מָה אֲנִי.

He used to say: If not I for myself, who is for me? And when I am for myself alone, what am I?

וְאִם לֹא עַכְשָׁיו, אֵימָתָי:

And if not now, when?

Hillel teaches that a person must take personal responsibility for their own spiritual growth and act without delay.

מִשְׁנָה טו

קְבִיעוּת הַתּוֹרָה, מְעוּט דִּבּוּר וְהַסְבָּרַת פָּנִים

Mishna 15 · Making Torah Study Fixed, Speaking Little and Doing Much, and Welcoming Everyone Warmly

שַׁמַּאי אוֹמֵר, עֲשֵׂה תוֹרָתְךָ קֶבַע. אֱמֹר מְעַט וַעֲשֵׂה הַרְבֵּה, וֱהֱוֵי מְקַבֵּל אֶת

Shammai says: Make your Torah fixed. Say little and do much, and be receiving

כָּל הָאָדָם בְּסֵבֶר פָּנִים יָפוֹת:

every person with a cheerful expression of face.

Shammai teaches the importance of establishing a fixed schedule for Torah study, prioritizing actions over words, and greeting every person with a pleasant and welcoming countenance.

מִשְׁנָה טז

עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב וְהִתְרַחֵק מִן הַסָּפֵק

Mishna 16 · Appointing a Teacher and Avoiding Doubt and Estimations in Tithing

רַבָּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הָיָה אוֹמֵר, עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רַב, וְהִסְתַּלֵּק מִן הַסָּפֵק, וְאַל

Rabban Gamliel would say: Make for yourself a teacher, and remove yourself from doubt, and do not

תַּרְבֶּה לְעַשֵּׂר אֹמְדוֹת:

increase to tithe by estimation.

Rabban Gamliel teaches the importance of establishing a halachic authority to resolve doubts and avoiding guesswork when performing mitzvos like tithing.

מִשְׁנָה יז

מַעֲלַת הַשְׁתִיקָה וְהַמַּעֲשֶׂה עַל פְּנֵי הַדִּבּוּר

Mishna 17 · The Virtue of Silence and Action Over Mere Words

שִׁמְעוֹן בְּנוֹ אוֹמֵר, כָּל יָמַי גָּדַלְתִּי בֵּין הַחֲכָמִים, וְלֹא מָצָאתִי לַגּוּף טוֹב

Shimon his son says: All my days I grew up among the Sages, and I did not find better for the body

אֶלָּא שְׁתִיקָה. וְלֹא הַמִּדְרָשׁ הוּא הָעִקָּר, אֶלָּא הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. וְכָל הַמַּרְבֶּה

than silence. And not the study is the main thing, but the action. And anyone who increases

דְּבָרִים, מֵבִיא חֵטְא:

words brings sin.

Shimon the son of Rabban Gamliel teaches that silence is the best path for the body, and that practical action is superior to mere study and excessive speech.

מִשְׁנָה יח

הַדִּין הָאֱמֶת וְהַשָּׁלוֹם שֶׁהָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד עֲלֵיהֶם

Mishna 18 · Justice Truth and Peace Upon Which the World Stands

רַבָּן שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר, עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַדִּין

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says, on three things the world stands, on justice

וְעַל הָאֱמֶת וְעַל הַשָּׁלוֹם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר זכריה ח אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפַּט שָׁלוֹם שִׁפְטוּ

and on truth and on peace, as it is said, Zechariah 8 truth and judgment of peace judge

בְּשַׁעֲרֵיכֶם:

in your gates

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel teaches that the preservation of human society depends upon the three pillars of justice, truth, and peace.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter opens with the Men of the Great Assembly and Shimon the Righteous establishing the pillars of the world, followed by Antigonus of Socho's warning to serve Hashem without expecting reward. We then progress through the teachings of the Zugos: Yose ben Yoezer and Yose ben Yochanan on bringing Sages and the poor into our homes; Yehoshua ben Perachiah and Nittai the Arbelite on acquiring teachers and avoiding evil neighbors; Yehudah ben Tabbai and Shimon ben Shetach on careful justice; and Shemaiah and Abtalion on avoiding the ruling power and guarding one's words. Finally, Hillel and Shammai teach us to pursue peace, fix our Torah study, and receive everyone with a pleasant countenance, leading into the instructions of Rabban Gamaliel and his son Shimon on silence and action, and concluding with Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel's declaration that the world stands on justice, truth, and peace.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

My dear friend, look at how this first chapter of Pirkei Avos begins. It does not start with abstract philosophies, but with a chain of transmission: Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and passed it down, generation after generation, until it reached us. This tells us that our Torah is not a theory; it is a living, breathing legacy of connection. When you learn, you are not just reading a book, you are joining a chain of holy souls. And what do these sages tell us? They tell us that the world stands on Torah, avodah, and gemilus chasadim, and that the ultimate goal of all our learning is not just to speak, but to do. Shimon his son says it clearly: 'Study is not the most important thing, but actions.'

Think about Shammai's golden rule: 'Say little, but do much, and receive all men with a pleasant countenance.' How often do we promise ourselves or others big things, only to fall short? The Torah wants us to build our lives on quiet, solid action. When you greet another Yid with a warm, genuine smile, you are literally sustaining the world. You are bringing the peace and truth that Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel says keeps the world standing.

Let us also take to heart the famous words of Hillel: 'If I am not for myself, who is for me? But if I am for my own self, what am I? And if not now, when?' We cannot wait for someone else to do our avodah for us, nor can we live only for ourselves. We must step up, take responsibility for our spiritual growth, and do it today, without putting it off.

Today, choose one small, concrete action instead of just talking about it. When you meet someone, greet them with a genuine, warm smile and a pleasant countenance, and make a fixed five minutes to learn Torah today without any distractions.

תְּהִלִּים · חֲמִשָּׁה קַאפִּיטְלָעך

The Five Daily Kapitlach

📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

These are the five kapitlach of Tehillim said every single day: 32, 43, 83, 121, and 130, each set word for word with its English meaning. They are gathered here as one section so the whole daily Tehillim can be said and downloaded together.

All introductions and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פֶּרֶק ל״ב CHAPTER 32

לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה׃

אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יַחְשֹׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עָוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה׃

כִּי הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי בָלוּ עַצְמָי בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם׃

כִּי יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יָדֶךָ נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי בְּחַרְבֹנֵי קַיִץ סֶלָה׃

חַטָּאתִי אוֹדִיעֲךָ וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא כִסִּיתִי אָמַרְתִּי אוֹדֶה עֲלֵי פְשָׁעַי לַיהוָה וְאַתָּה נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי סֶלָה׃

עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חָסִיד אֵלֶיךָ לְעֵת מְצֹא רַק לְשֵׁטֶף מַיִם רַבִּים אֵלָיו לֹא יַגִּיעוּ׃

אַתָּה סֵתֶר לִי מִצַּר תִּצְּרֵנִי רָנֵּי פַלֵּט תְּסוֹבְבֵנִי סֶלָה׃

אַשְׂכִּילְךָ וְאוֹרְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ זוּ תֵּלֵךְ אִיעֲצָה עָלֶיךָ עֵינִי׃

אַל תִּהְיוּ כְּסוּס כְּפֶרֶד אֵין הָבִין בְּמֶתֶג וָרֶסֶן עֶדְיוֹ לִבְלוֹם בַּל קְרֹב אֵלֶיךָ׃

רַבִּים מַכְאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בַּיהוָה חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ׃

שִׂמְחוּ בַיהוָה וְגִילוּ צַדִּיקִים וְהַרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׁרֵי לֵב׃

פֶּרֶק מ״ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חָסִיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְּפַלְּטֵנִי׃

כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב׃

שְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הַר קָדְשְׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ׃

וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי׃

מַה תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי׃

פֶּרֶק פ״ג CHAPTER 83

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף׃

אֱלֹהִים אַל דֳּמִי לָךְ אַל תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל׃

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יֶהֱמָיוּן וּמְשַׂנְאֶיךָ נָשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ׃

עַל עַמְּךָ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וְיִתְיָעֲצוּ עַל צְפוּנֶיךָ׃

אָמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַכְחִידֵם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזָּכֵר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד׃

כִּי נוֹעֲצוּ לֵב יַחְדָּו עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ׃

אָהֳלֵי אֱדוֹם וְיִשְׁמְעֵאלִים מוֹאָב וְהַגְרִים׃

גְּבָל וְעַמּוֹן וַעֲמָלֵק פְּלֶשֶׁת עִם יֹשְׁבֵי צוֹר׃

גַּם אַשּׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זְרוֹעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סֶלָה׃

עֲשֵׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְיָבִין בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן׃

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְעֵין דֹּאר הָיוּ דֹמֶן לָאֲדָמָה׃

שִׁיתֵמוֹ נְדִיבֵמוֹ כְּעֹרֵב וְכִזְאֵב וּכְזֶבַח וּכְצַלְמֻנָּע כָּל נְסִיכֵמוֹ׃

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירָשָׁה לָּנוּ אֵת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים׃

אֱלֹהַי שִׁיתֵמוֹ כַגַּלְגַּל כְּקַשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ׃

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר יָעַר וּכְלֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט הָרִים׃

כֵּן תִּרְדְּפֵם בְּסַעֲרֶךָ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תְבַהֲלֵם׃

מַלֵּא פְנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן וִיבַקְשׁוּ שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה׃

יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ עֲדֵי עַד וְיַחְפְּרוּ וְיֹאבֵדוּ׃

וְיֵדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה לְבַדֶּךָ עֶלְיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ׃

פֶּרֶק קכ״א CHAPTER 121

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הֶהָרִים מֵאַיִן יָבֹא עֶזְרִי׃

עֶזְרִי מֵעִם יְהוָה עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ׃

אַל יִתֵּן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ אַל יָנוּם שֹׁמְרֶךָ׃

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל׃

יְהוָה שֹׁמְרֶךָ יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל יַד יְמִינֶךָ׃

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יַכֶּכָּה וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה׃

יְהוָה יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשֶׁךָ׃

יְהוָה יִשְׁמָר צֵאתְךָ וּבוֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם׃

פֶּרֶק ק״ל CHAPTER 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעֲמַקִּים קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה׃

אֲדֹנָי שִׁמְעָה בְקוֹלִי תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי׃

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר יָהּ אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד׃

כִּי עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא׃

קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחָלְתִּי׃

נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר׃

יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֶסֶד וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְּדוּת׃

וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו׃

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When you feel weighed down by your mistakes, do not keep silent or try to hide them. Open your heart to Hashem in honest confession, and then immediately shift your focus to absolute trust in His forgiveness and constant protection, knowing that He never slumbers and is always guarding your steps.

Today, the moment you feel a heavy heart or a sense of spiritual distance, stop what you are doing, speak to Hashem in your own words to acknowledge your mistake, and then say out loud: 'My help is from Hashem, who forgives and guards my soul.'